

all post-secondary situations, the statement necessarily ignores any and all developmental frames. Are the students in first-year courses assumed to be 18-year-old high school graduates? Given the range of educational settings, assumptions about first-year students in the aggregate are risky at best. If the OS is deployed as part of a writing curriculum that is insensitive to students' needs, the pedagogical benefits could be compromised.

An afterword, written by Kathleen Blake Yancey, recapitulates the community origins of the OS, noting that the conversation about the document was unusually public throughout its development. Now that the OS is part of the pedagogical apparatus available to composition teachers, Yancey predicts stronger links between the OS and assessment, and therefore, curriculum. Local adaptations of the OS lend themselves to such connections within institutions.

The Outcomes Book is self-consciously social and collective in nature, which can make the reading experience a bit disjointed, because of inconsistency of voice and emphasis. Nevertheless, the overall effect produces respect for a laudable process of inquiry, conversation, and debate coupled with a generous attitude toward present and future applications. Everyone in the OS collective endorses review and revision of the OS from time to time. If the tone is occasionally self-congratulatory, that can be forgiven in light of a creative, substantive contribution to pedagogy.

Northfield, MN

WORKS CITED

- Latour, Bruno. *Science in Action*. Harvard UP, 1987.
- Outcomes Steering Committee. "The WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition." *College English* 63 (2001): 321-25.
- Outcomes Steering Committee. "WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition." *Writing Program Administration* 23.1/2 (1999): 59-70.

Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era, by James A. Inman. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. 304 pages.

Reviewed by Eliot Rendleman, University of Nevada, Reno

James Inman's *Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era* defines the computers and writing community; argues for a conception of our current

period of computers and writing research/practice that equally investigates individuals, technologies, and their shared contexts; and promotes computers and writing research/instruction focused on agency, diversity, and equity. Inman extends and synthesizes the published work of such scholars as Cynthia Selfe, who focuses on critically analyzing hardware, software, and/or the rhetoric of technology (e.g., “Lest We Think the Revolution is a Revolution”), and Robert Johnson and his focus on the individual technology user (e.g., *User-Centered Technology*). While Selfe and similar scholars focus their investigations somewhat strictly upon writing technologies, and Johnson focuses on users/individuals, Inman wants to consider both of these objects of study within unique and broad contexts. He uses the term “cyborg” based on Donna Haraway’s concept that humans have the ability to “seize” the tools traditionally used to oppress them and become, in a sense, a part of the tools to work against their oppression, emerge from the margins, and gain political empowerment (Inman 109). The first three chapters of Inman’s book focus on historically and contextually establishing or—depending on the audience—legitimizing the computers and writing community as a professional and productive part of the academy. The latter three chapters of the book focus their discussions on the pedagogical implications and implementation of the concepts involved during this cyborg era.

Of the several interesting and important aspects of his book (such as his literature reviews, especially in chapter 1, and conceptual explanations throughout all the chapters), I find the “Community Voices” montages or sections and the pedagogical discussions particularly useful. The sections located between the chapters include a photo (and sometimes a drawing) of a researcher/practitioner of computers and writing, from graduate students to established scholars, and their written responses to Inman’s questions such as the following: “How did you come to be active in the computers and writing community? What worries you about the computers and writing community, and why does it worry you?” and more (x). These sections illustrate Inman’s conception of what community is and underscore that a computers and writing community exists through a shared (individual and group) history and common concerns. A typical shared history is a conscious or accidental engagement with computers and writing in the early to mid-1980s, and two recurring common concerns are status and respectability within the academy and the proverbial preaching to the choir within the community. With regards to his pedagogical discussions, Inman presents his studies and classroom practices he implemented at the University of South Florida (USF) and at Furman University’s Center for Collaborative Learning and Communication (CCLC), a discussion that offers guidelines for helping a reader create a classroom concerned with the individual, technologies, and the contexts they share

After defining the computers and writing community by his discussion of the conferences, organizations, and publications needed to establish and give prominence to an academic community, field, or discipline, and after defining cyborg era by his discussion of the interrelatedness of individuals, technologies, and the contexts they share, Inman establishes with the subsequent chapters the subsumed concepts and categories of the cyborg era: cyborg history, cyborg narrative, cyborg literacy, cyborg pedagogy, and cyborg responsibility. He defines the concept of cyborg history in chapter 2. A cyborg history considers alternate histories of the computers and writing community, in addition to the exploration of the following questions: “What about technologies other than the computer? What about resistance to technologies? What about the influence of women? What about the influences of minorities?” (Inman 60). These questions are pertinent to developing a cyborg history for obvious reasons. First, a traditional history would be one dimensional, typically offering event dates, such as the moment computers entered the writing class as word processors. But a cyborg history is concerned with what is at the margins related to that entry and constituting a foundation for the computers and writing community, such as the government funding of technology in education encouraged by the cold war, resistance to the naturalization of technology, and the contributions of minority programmers and computer engineers (Inman 66). A cyborg history equally examines unique situations within a broader historical and social context, questions historical ideologies, and reveals the contributions of minority individuals and groups.

In chapter 3 of *Computers and Writing*, Inman extends the historical discussion of chapter 2 by examining two prominent narrative themes. He grounds his examination upon Jean Francois Lyotard’s postmodern concept of legitimation, making this third chapter a further, reinforcing reiteration of the first chapter. According to Inman and his interpretation of Lyotard, a group or culture defines knowledge and, in turn, legitimizes itself by traditional master narratives, such as the narrative of industrial progress (109). But since World War II, with the rise of postmodernist perspectives and the emergence of political power for traditionally disenfranchised and silenced groups, competing narratives have destabilized the master narratives.

Since the computers and writing community has been a marginalized group within the academy and English studies, struggling for professional and even monetary compensation for the extra work its members often perform, it is constituted by competing, “little” narratives. Although one could offer several cyborg narratives, Inman finds the narratives of Textual Transition and Pedagogical Evolution to be the most prominent themes within the computers and writing scholarship. As a cyborg narrative, the textual transition narrative is a story of resistance. On the surface it may seem like the narrative moves us

through the plot points of scholarly concern for the word processor as a tool for revision, grammars of the screen and desktop interfaces, and rhetorics of email, hypertext, MOOs, and multimedia. The textual transition narrative offers a story of scholars exposing how technology often does not create diverse and equitable contexts for scholarship and teaching, but rather reinforces the discriminating frameworks and hierarchies of our larger society, for example, recreated in the patriarchal and middle class value-laden Windows® *desktop* interfaces based upon corporate and capitalist ideologies. Inman's discussion of the cyborg narrative of pedagogical evolution seems to mirror the textual transition story in plot. As concerns about the nature of textuality and technology have changed, so have pedagogical practices. With the advent of word processors, teachers have been able to study and rethink the revision processes students can learn; with the advent of networked computers, teachers can study collaborative processes; with the advent of hypertext and the Internet, teachers have been able to teach a new levels of rhetorical strategies and offer students publishing opportunities previously denied them.

Chapters 4 and 5 of *Computers and Writing* describe pedagogical practice according to Inman's cyborg era theories. The fourth chapter constructs cyborg literacy. Related to the semiotic concepts of meaning-making, cyborg literacy emphasizes how the symbolic usage and ideologies of individuals and the associated concepts and ideologies of technologies converge in a particular context. Inman illuminates this theory with his study and description of "Jose," a former student at USF. Jose's social concerns, his use of technology other than computers, and (even) the chair on which he performed his work in class intersected to create meaning for his professional and private lives. In the fifth chapter, Inman shows how cyborg pedagogy is related to the critical pedagogy of Freire, as argued in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The main tenet of critical pedagogy is the empowerment of learners by helping them expose oppressive practices within their political and social contexts through instruction that is mainly in their control. Although our educational system resists student control, teachers can set up assignments that offer students great freedom in executing the assignment tasks and an opportunity to question their assumptions. An interesting activity Inman had his CCLC students perform was the creation of an "ugly" web site. This assignment exposed the ideologies of his majority students, illustrated problems with access and privilege, and empowered at least one of his minority students.

Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era is an extremely useful book for a broad audience, but it might be limiting in one minor aspect. If one is an experienced scholar/teacher in computers and writing, the book definitely offers a sense of community by presenting a shared history and shared concerns. For those new to the community, including graduate students and experienced

compositionists, then there are several benefits and only a minor limitation. For graduate students, Inman offers a wonderful model of scholarship, with a comprehensive literature review, a strong theoretical framework, a section on practice, and a call for future research in chapter 6. The limiting aspect of this book is the sometimes too general descriptions of computer technology/applications. Although he explains some technologies and computer applications, such as MOOs (114), Inman's descriptions may not be extensive enough for one initially entering the community. This was not supposed to be a nuts-and-bolts book, but more footnote descriptions or appendix entries about computer technologies/applications may be in order to help the uninitiated.

Reno, NV

Multiple Genres, Multiple Voices: Teaching Argument in Composition and Literature, by Cheryl L. Johnson and Jayne A. Moneysmith. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook, 2005. 120 pages.

Reviewed by Timothy Barnett, Northeastern Illinois University

As one student cited in Cheryl L. Johnson's and Jayne A. Moneysmith's *Multiple Genres, Multiple Voices* notes, the traditional research paper often inspires little thought on the part of students: "[A]nyone can write a research paper because somebody already wrote it for you. You grab from everyone else . . . with little or no personal 'pizzazz' . . ." (2). *Multiple Genres, Multiple Voices* is Johnson and Moneysmith's response to this issue, and the text will interest instructors primarily interested in pedagogical strategies rather than theory. As the authors note, their book "is not . . . about the nature of argument. It is a book that presents a method of teaching argument that is flexible and adaptable. . ." (2). However, while the authors have created an accessible book that offers many classroom exercises, *Multiple Genres, Multiple Voices* would benefit greatly if Johnson and Moneysmith were more willing to theorize—not about the nature of argument necessarily, but about the complex pedagogical questions their work raises. The author's choice to address pedagogy is perfectly reasonable, but I believe that their privileging of classroom strategies over pedagogical theory limits the success of their work.

The book's first chapter, "Multivoiced Argument: A New View," defines the Multivoiced Argument (MVA) as follows: "In an MVA, writers create an argument . . . by using multiple genres written from different points of view. Genres might include a letter, a dialogue, a report or even a poem—in addition to the traditional essay. Students bolster their argument with research . . . creating an organic whole. . ." (2). Students might, for ex-